



**State of Connecticut**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
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**Testimony of Representative Linda Schofield**  
**Select Committee on Children**  
**February 8, 2011**

**HB 5120: AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE  
FOR CHILDREN ADOPTED THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES**

Chairman Urban and esteemed members of the Committee –

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB # 5120.

This bill addresses a basic issue of fairness. Current law provides for DCF adoptees to attend a state college or to attend another college of their choice with cash assistance equivalent to the cost of tuition and room & board at a state college.

However, this only applies to children adopted AFTER the seemingly arbitrary date of December 31, 2004. Families who stepped up to the plate to help our state's most vulnerable children prior to that date are left out in the cold. If they did such a good job with their kids that they have prepared them to attend college, which should be the goal for as many DCF children as possible, then they suffer the consequences of their own success....a college tuition to pay.

As they say, no good turn goes unpunished!

This bill would right this injustice and offer tuition assistance to these children and families as well.

I understand that we are facing enormous budget deficits, and you all know I am well known for my fiscally conservative outlook. So, it is unusual for me to support a cost

increase in this environment. That is why I am not even asking for fully equal treatment for these families....just tuition assistance (not room & board) to help them with their bills. Alternatively, we could offer a monthly stipend.

And I am more than willing to discuss options for offsetting this increase in cost, within this bill, by tinkering with the subsidies provided to DCF children adopted after the magic date, as long as we don't disenfranchise anyone already in college. That way everyone can benefit and we can maximize the number of children reaching their full educational potential.

You will hear from families affected by this bill in this hearing. I will be happy to work on the details of this bill, should you see fit to pass it out of committee, which I hope you will do!